



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701-5505

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NOAA Fisheries Service Publishes Final Rule to Establish Marine Protected Areas for Snapper-Grouper in U.S. Federal Waters of the South Atlantic

NOAA Fisheries Service published a final rule to implement Amendment 14 to the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan (FMP) in the *Federal Register* on January 13, 2009 (74 FR 1621). The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) submitted Amendment 14 and associated Final Environmental Impact Statement for review, approval, and implementation by NOAA Fisheries Service. These provisions are effective February 12, 2009.

The rule establishes eight Type 2 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in federal waters ranging from North Carolina to Florida (see Figure 1). A Type 2 MPA is an area within which fishing for or retention of snapper-grouper species is prohibited but other types of legal fishing, such as trolling, are allowed. The prohibition on possession does not apply to a person aboard a vessel that is in transit with fishing gear appropriately stowed.

drafted by the HMS Division of NOAA, which is responsible for the management of HMS fisheries. The Amendment 2 final rule was published on June 24, 2008 (73 FR 35778).

The primary purpose of implementing these MPAs is to protect a portion of the population and habitat of long-lived, deep-water snapper-grouper species (speckled hind, snowy grouper, warsaw grouper, yellowedge grouper, misty grouper, golden tilefish, and blueline tilefish) from directed fishing pressure to achieve a more natural sex ratio, age, and size structure, while minimizing adverse social and economic effects.

Addresses

Electronic copies of Amendment 14 and the rule can be viewed on line at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Copies of the amendment and the rule may also be obtained from the Council by:

Sending a written request to:

NOAA Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

Or by e-mailing safmc@safmc.net, or calling the Council's toll free number: 1-866-SAFMC-10, or sending a written request to:

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place, Suite 201
North Charleston, South Carolina 29405

How Can We Improve These Fishery Bulletins?

If you have any suggestions on how we may improve the contents of future fishery bulletins please contact:
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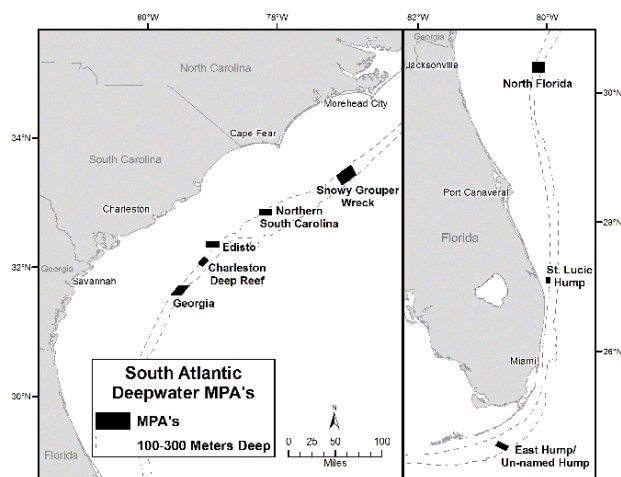


Figure 1. Map of Type 2 MPA's.

The use of shark bottom longline gear is also prohibited within the MPAs. However, this provision; however, has been implemented through Amendment 2 to the Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) FMP